

50 Ways Israel Is Fulfilling God's Promise to Abraham in This Age

The 50th anniversary of the re-unification of Jerusalem on May 24th will be celebrated during the 50 days between the Jewish festivals of Pesach (Passover) and Shavuot (Pentecost). This feature article focuses on the significance of the number 50 in many of the recent amazing achievements of the Jewish state.

Among Israel's numerous medical innovations, ApiFix's minimally invasive system has straightened the deformed spines of 50 adolescents within two years of being approved in Europe. And the Israeli breakthrough treatment hCDR1 from XTL Biopharmaceuticals is the first new treatment for Lupus sufferers in 50 years. Finally, when surgeons from Save a Child's Heart mended the heart of baby Lisa from East Timor, the Southeast Asian nation became the 50th country to have children treated by surgeons from the life-saving Israeli organization.

It's refreshing to see how much Israel has done for the environment in recent years. Thanks to making a substantial improvement in water quality, the freshwater Yarkon Bleak fish has now returned to the mid-stretches of the Yarkon river, after an absence of 50 years. And it is an annual event to watch newborn sea turtles scamper "home" to the sea just 50 days after the mother turtles lay their eggs on clean Israeli beaches. But Israel's biggest cleantech achievement by far is the 700% increase in crops that Israel has managed to produce from the same amount of water it used 50 years ago.

Israel can be proud of its inclusive treatment of the less fortunate in society. It is even building a new town where 50

Israeli families will be integrated with dozens of high-functioning special needs adults, who will be employed alongside regular workers in the local services. Another highlight is how the all-volunteer Israel Lawn Bowls Association for the Blind coaches 50 adults with visual disabilities at clubs in Israel.

One example (among many) of co-existence was a soccer tournament in the Israeli-Arab town of Baqa al-Gharbiyye where Israeli children (50 Jews and 50 Arabs) were split up into six different soccer teams, each representing a 2016 World Cup country. Another is the Moona outer space research center in the Israel-Arab town of Majd Al-Kurum in which 50 Jewish and 50 Muslim high school students attend courses in robotics, drones, 3D printing, electronics and other technologies related to outer-space exploration.

Israel's global impact is astonishing. Israeli-Arab Bedouins are using Israeli HomeBioGas units (subsidized by Israel's Environment ministry) to transform trash into bio-gas. 50 HomeBioGas units are now being tested in the Dominican Republic as part of attempts to curb deforestation caused by the burning of wood for cooking. In Africa, Israel's award-winning Amiad Water Systems supplied 50 filtration systems to a project providing clean drinking water in Angola. And Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu improved relations with Africa immensely during the first visit by an Israeli leader to the continent in 50 years.

Trade relations were enhanced by visits to Israel by Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker and his delegation of 50 business and academic leaders. Another 50 business professionals came to Israel for the New Zealand's inaugural Innovation Mission. And 50 university and secondary students from Hong Kong got the chance to see firsthand the secrets of Israeli entrepreneurial success, thanks to Israel's Technion and the Li Ka Shing Foundation.

It may be only the 50th anniversary of Jerusalem's reunification, but Jewish links to its capital city go back thousands of years. To experience this, tourists can now do "the *mikveh* trail" – a newly-opened walk to see 50 ritual baths (*mikvot*) unearthed near Temple Mount. These were used by Jewish pilgrims to purify themselves prior to making offerings in the temple over 2000 years ago. And please watch this video by Hebrew University of Jerusalem archaeologist Dr. Eilat Mazar about the ancient Jewish treasures discovered during excavations just 50 meters from Temple Mount.

Now let's celebrate—there must be at least 50 ways! {eoa}

Michael Ordman writes a free weekly newsletter containing positive news stories about Israel.

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